



Texas Department of Insurance Division of Workers' Compensation

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Work-Related Fatalities Increased in Texas in 2007

AUSTIN, TX – Texas recorded 527 work-related fatalities in 2007, an eight percent increase compared to 2006 when 489 fatalities occurred. Nationally, there were 5,488 fatal work injuries in 2007, a decrease of 6 percent from the revised total of 5,840 in 2006, according to the most recently available data released August 20 by the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI).

Table 1. Annual Number of Fatal Occupational Injuries in Texas, 1990-2007

Year	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Number	516	530	536	529	497	475	514	459	523	468	572	536	417	491	440	495	489	527

Note: Data for 2007 are preliminary; data for previous years are final.

Source: Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

The Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI-DWC) compiles detailed information on all work-related fatalities occurring in Texas for the CFOI, a program jointly administered with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). TDI-DWC annually releases total fatality counts and descriptive data in an effort to provide information to promote occupational safety, and to reduce work-related injuries, illnesses and fatalities.

Among the causes of work-related fatalities in Texas in 2007:

- over one third (36 percent) of fatalities were related to transportation incidents (Table 2);
- workplace homicides experienced a 56 percent increase in fatalities compared to 2006; and
- nearly one third (29 percent) of all fatalities occurred in the construction and extraction occupation group.

Causes of Fatalities

Although transportation incidents continued to be the leading cause of fatalities with 192 in 2007, there was a 5 percent decrease from 202 fatalities in 2006. The highest decrease (24 percent) involved pedestrian employees who were struck by vehicles or mobile equipment.

Following transportation incidents, assaults and violent acts accounted for the second highest cause of fatalities (16 percent). Unlike transportation incidents, assaults and violent acts experienced an increase of 46 percent from 2006. The highest increase (56 percent) occurred in homicides. Seventy-six percent of

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the homicides were in the service providing industry and involved 27 percent of employees in the protective service occupations and 24 percent in the sales and related occupations.

The number of fatalities resulting from falls increased by 30 percent from 2006, with the highest increase in the construction industry (62 percent of all falls). Hispanic workers accounted for 53 percent of the total falls—an increase of 128 percent from 2006.

Occupations

Construction trades employees had the largest number of fatalities in Texas in 2007 (20 percent) and those fatalities were primarily caused by falls, accounting for 39 percent, followed by transportation incidents (20 percent). The second leading occupational group was motor vehicle operators (15 percent), with 71 percent of the fatalities for that group due to transportation incidents. Protective service occupations had the highest increase in fatalities (238 percent) from 2006, 48 percent were in transportation incidents and 39 percent were in assaults and violent acts.

Worker Demographics

Women accounted for 6 percent of the total fatalities in Texas in 2007, an increase of 17 percent from 2006. Women were victims of assault and violent act incidents in 47 percent of the cases; they died in transportation incidents in 41 percent of the cases.

Transportation incidents were the leading cause of fatalities involving men in Texas (36 percent), followed by contact with objects and equipment (17 percent).

Twenty-four percent of all fatalities were experienced by employees between 45 and 54 years of age, regardless of gender. Employees between 20 to 24 years of age had the highest increase (40 percent) from 2006. Employees between 35 to 44 years of age were the only age group that had a decrease (9 percent) in 2007.

White non-Hispanic employees comprised 46 percent of the total fatalities; Hispanics accounted for 40 percent, and Black non-Hispanics accounted for 11 percent — an increase of 51 percent from 2006.

Among the causes of work-related fatalities in the U.S. in 2007:

- the number of falls in 2007 rose to a series high of 835 — a 39 percent increase since 1992 when the CFOI program was first conducted;
- transportation incidents, which typically account for two-fifths of all workplace fatalities, fell to a series low of 2,234 cases in 2007;
- workplace homicides rose 13 percent to 610 in 2007 after reaching a series low of 540 in 2006; and
- the number of fatal injuries among protective service occupations rose 19 percent in 2007 to 337, led by an increase in the number of police officers fatally injured on the job.

Fatality Prevention

To encourage occupational safety in the workplace, the TDI-DWC provides safety programs and services, including free safety and health consultations to assist with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) compliance, free safety publications, free training video/DVD loans, and safety training. With over 50 safety courses in its curriculum, the TDI-DWC seeks opportunities to partner with

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employer groups, trade associations, and business organizations to deliver localized safety training in target industries such as transportation and warehousing, construction, manufacturing, hospitals and nursing homes, general merchandise and building and garden supply stores, and educational services.

In addition to its 13th Annual Safety Conference, the Texas Safety Summit, the TDI-DWC will host Regional Safety Summits across the state beginning in September 2008 to address the leading causes of fatal and nonfatal injuries in Texas workplaces.

For more information, contact the TDI-DWC at 512-804-4658 or cfoi@tdi.state.tx.us.

Table 2. Annual Number of Fatal Occupational Injuries in Texas by Event, 1998-2007

Event or exposure	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Contact with objects and equipment	77	68	91	85	65	70	77	80	88	85
Struck by object	41	35	53	53	38	44	49	52	52	47
Falls	59	55	76	68	69	52	61	54	60	78
Fall to lower level	57	51	73	65	64	47	58	50	54	72
Exposure to harmful substances or environments	74	54	64	54	42	51	35	63	54	66
Contact with electric current	42	35	34	34	26	36	21	38	35	39
Transportation incidents	213	204	216	209	158	201	194	200	202	192
Highway incidents	122	130	135	141	107	118	121	132	129	132
Aircraft incidents	15	9	25	12	7	29	28	7	6	5
Fires and explosions	21	16	21	22	19	27	18	31	23	17
Assaults and violent acts	79	71	101	96	63	90	54	67	59	86
Homicides	60	59	82	69	54	69	37	46	45	70
Self inflicted injuries	19	9	18	26	8	18	14	18	13	13
Other or not reported	--	--	3	--	--	--	--	--	3	3

Notes:

1 Data for 2007 are preliminary; data for previous years are final.

2 Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately.

3 Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria.

Source: Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

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